

# THE EXPERIENCES OF THE FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHERS IN IMPLEMENTING CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

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## AIM OF RESEARCH

Effective mathematics teaching is a complex endeavour that requires subject knowledge, the theory and pedagogy of mathematics (Hourigan & Leave, 2010). This investigation explores the experiences of the Foundation Phase (FP) teachers in implementing Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement in teaching grade 3 mathematics. The learner performance in Mathematics in rural schools of South Africa is a general problem. This has been confirmed by the report of the Annual National Assessment (ANA) results of 2011 and 2012. Precisely Limpopo Province was considered low (25%) in performance as compared to other provinces of South Africa (DBE, 2012). The cause of this poor performance is not well known. Some studies relate poor performance to learners, while others associate it with the pedagogic method and inappropriate teacher professional development (Ramorola & Nyaumwe, 2011).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS OR RESEARCH OBJECTIVE OR AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to explore the experiences of the Foundation Phase teachers in implementing Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement in grade 3 Mathematics. The research question (RQ) asked was: *To what extent has CAPS being implemented in grade 3 Mathematics?*

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach (Johnson & Christen, 2008; Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtler, 2010; Mouton, 2008). Purposive sampling assisted in selecting twelve FP teachers. Qualitative data was collected through the individual semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and document studies. The collected data was transcribed, coded and analysed thematically.

## RESULTS

The results revealed that the FP teachers have integrated concrete objects to implement the grade 3 Mathematics curriculum. Furthermore, the research highlighted that teachers use other teaching and learning programmes like MOLTENO and Breakthrough method to implement CAPS in grade 3 Mathematics.

## CONCLUSION

The results confirmed earlier studies that the use of concrete objects in lower classes are key for effective implementation of the mathematics curriculum. Furthermore, the learner's involvement and written activities remain the key focus of learning mathematics in the FP. This study was a small scale which utilized a small sample of DIMAMO circuit. Thus, the results cannot be generalised to the entire population in South Africa. However, the need for in-service training of FP teachers emerged.

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